

# Sports Fields Maintenance Closures



Each year sport fields around the city are closed for turf maintenance. Most turf maintenance closures are scheduled. These closures are necessary to allow the appropriate amount of time to improve the quality of the existing turf, to facilitate new turf growth and to rehabilitate the playing surface.

**During a maintenance closure, it is extremely important that no one uses the field.**

Each year, there are reports of teams using fields that are under a maintenance closure. In order to educate all groups on the requirements and reasons for the field closures, the City of Kelowna has prepared a short FAQ. If you have any further questions regarding field closures please contact Chris Babcock, Community Recreation Coordinator, at 250-469-8780 or [cbabcock@kelowna.ca](mailto:cbabcock@kelowna.ca).

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **What is a maintenance field closure?**

The field is closed to all use during the specified time.

### **How long is a field usually closed for?**

Typically field closures are for three weeks; however there may be circumstances where longer durations are required.

### **Why do fields need to be maintained?**

Maintenance is necessary to improve the quality of the existing turf, to facilitate new turf growth and to rehabilitate the playing surface. On-going foot traffic creates poor turf density which can cause safety issues during the season, requiring longer closure periods.

### **Why do you need to close a field for so long?**

The field must be closed in order to do the required aerating, topdressing and over seeding.

*Aerating* is the process of removing soil cores from the turf and is done as a means of reducing turf compaction, reducing thatch buildup, improving the infiltration of water/nutrients, encouraging deeper roots, and creating an environment where grass seed can have direct contact with the soil.

*Topdressing* involves spreading one quarter of an inch of sand over the entire field. This helps to offset the compaction of the ground during the previous playing season and aids in making the field more playable. Topdressing also helps to fill in any low spots (worn out areas) in the field in order to create a safe, consistent and level playing surface. Topdressing improves the overall quality of the playing field and requires time to settle before play can resume. If you use the field too soon, you

## Booking a field

- ▶ Call 250-469-8504 or check out the Facility Rentals page online at [kelowna.ca/recreation](http://kelowna.ca/recreation).
- ▶ For information on field use, view the Conditions of Use and Allocation Policy.

## Field Closure

- ▶ Call 250-469-8503 ext. 2 to find out which fields are closed due to weather or other events.
- ▶ The Sports Field Maintenance Schedule can be found online at [kelowna.ca/parks](http://kelowna.ca/parks).

## Service Requests

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If you see garbage/debris that needs to be picked up or any other park problems, report them through the City's online service request system at [kelowna.ca/servicerequests](http://kelowna.ca/servicerequests).

For information on City sports fields maintenance, call Park Services at 250-71-PARKS.

disturb the top dressing and prevent this from occurring.

*Over-seeding* is the process of seeding the field with blended turf grass seeds. These seeds need time to germinate, establish roots, and mature. If the seeds are disturbed, they will not root and grow into viable plants. Basically, if you use the field after the over-seeding, you will destroy the seeds and you will not have any new grass; resulting in expanded worn areas and less turf.

### **Our sport has low impact; how can a bit of practicing during a closure really hurt a field?**

Even low impact, light practices result in the nullification of the topdressing and over-seeding process. Without getting the required time for the program to establish itself, the work will have no effect and the field will suffer. Over time, the quality will deteriorate and cost more (time and money) to rehabilitate.

The fields also require additional irrigation in order to support the new grass. This means water will be turned on during the day and the ground will be wet, making any new roots more susceptible to being torn out and inhibiting any new growth. Turf is a living thing. It needs time to rest and rejuvenate.

### **What we're doing.**

To provide the best possible quality of turf, the City of Kelowna attempts to balance the overall schedule by allowing for rest periods between heavy uses, creating a Sportfield maintenance schedule based on past experiences, and continuously monitors field conditions and responds as necessary.

The City of Kelowna works hard to provide all users with a top quality playing surface by implementing a high quality, efficient and cost effective maintenance program so all users; young and old, have a safe and positive experience.

### ***Water conservation***

The City of Kelowna follows any water restrictions from the various water utilities. The park irrigation program was designed to look at minimizing water use based on weather conditions and plant requirements. Most sites are on a central control system that can be adjusted to weather conditions, and there are weather stations that help calculate how much water is required based on temperature and precipitation.

Irrigation runs during the evenings, but is sometimes tested during the day. These tests take place for a short period of time under the supervision of staff. Staff will also run short irrigation programs during hot weather to cool the surface temperature of turf to keep it healthy.

### **What you can do.**

Understanding the reasons for maintenance closures and the importance of staying off sport fields during these periods is the first step.

The second step is educating your peers on the importance of staying off the fields during maintenance closures.

It's your turf. With your assistance, we can continue to have the best fields around.

**Thank you and have a great season.**